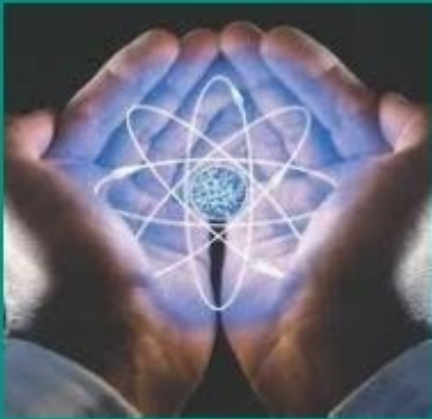

Academia Open



By Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo

Table Of Contents

Journal Cover	1
Author[s] Statement.....	3
Editorial Team	4
Article information	5
Check this article update (crossmark)	5
Check this article impact	5
Cite this article.....	5
Title page.....	6
Article Title	6
Author information	6
Abstract	6
Article content	7

Originality Statement

The author[s] declare that this article is their own work and to the best of their knowledge it contains no materials previously published or written by another person, or substantial proportions of material which have been accepted for the published of any other published materials, except where due acknowledgement is made in the article. Any contribution made to the research by others, with whom author[s] have work, is explicitly acknowledged in the article.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The author[s] declare that this article was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

Copyright Statement

Copyright © Author(s). This article is published under the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY 4.0) licence. Anyone may reproduce, distribute, translate and create derivative works of this article (for both commercial and non-commercial purposes), subject to full attribution to the original publication and authors. The full terms of this licence may be seen at <http://creativecommons.org/licences/by/4.0/legalcode>

EDITORIAL TEAM

Editor in Chief

Mochammad Tanzil Multazam, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo, Indonesia

Managing Editor

Bobur Sobirov, Samarkand Institute of Economics and Service, Uzbekistan

Editors

Fika Megawati, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo, Indonesia

Mahardika Darmawan Kusuma Wardana, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo, Indonesia

Wiwit Wahyu Wijayanti, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo, Indonesia

Farkhod Abdurakhmonov, Silk Road International Tourism University, Uzbekistan

Dr. Hindarto, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo, Indonesia

Evi Rinata, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo, Indonesia

M Faisal Amir, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo, Indonesia

Dr. Hana Catur Wahyuni, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo, Indonesia

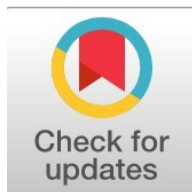
Complete list of editorial team ([link](#))

Complete list of indexing services for this journal ([link](#))

How to submit to this journal ([link](#))

Article information

Check this article update (crossmark)



Check this article impact (*)



Save this article to Mendeley



(*) Time for indexing process is various, depends on indexing database platform

Improving The Effective Methods of Developing Sports Tourism in the Regions

Oblokulov Ramazon Axtam o'g'li, oramazon@gmail.com,(1)

“Silk Road” International University of Tourism and Cultural Heritage Doctoral Candidate

⁽¹⁾ Corresponding author

Abstract

General Background: Sports tourism has emerged as a rapidly expanding segment of the global tourism industry, driving economic growth, infrastructure development, and cultural exchange. Specific Background: In Uzbekistan, the historic regions of Samarkand and Bukhara possess substantial potential for sports tourism, yet this potential remains underutilized due to limited facilities, inadequate marketing, and a shortage of qualified personnel. Knowledge Gap: Previous studies have rarely examined sports tourism development at a regional level in Central Asia, leaving limited empirical insights into strategies for integrating local infrastructure, management capacity, and international market positioning. Aims: This study aims to assess the current state of sports tourism in Samarkand and Bukhara, identify key challenges, and propose development strategies to enhance competitiveness. Results: Mixed-method analysis indicates significant growth in tourist interest and revenue, but reveals persistent constraints in modern sports infrastructure, digital marketing penetration, and professional skills among tourism operators. Novelty: The research provides one of the first strategic, evidence-based assessments linking sports tourism development with regional economic planning in these Uzbek regions. Implications: Strengthening infrastructure investment, targeted marketing, and specialized training programs can enhance regional competitiveness and position Samarkand and Bukhara as emerging destinations in the global sports tourism market

Highlight :

- Shows strong potential for expanding sports tourism in both regions.
- Key challenges include limited infrastructure and weak marketing efforts.
- Strategic investment and improved human resource capacity are required for development.

Keywords : Sports Tourism, Samarkand, Bukhara, Infrastructure Development, Marketing Strategies.

Published date: 2025-11-19

Introduction

Sports tourism is a sector of the world tourism industry that is becoming very important as it is not just regarded as a potential leading to economic growth, but also as the one enhancing the local infrastructure and facilitates cultural exchange. It is characterized as the type of travel aimed at the engagement or attendance of sporting events and is increasing at a phenomenal pace [1].

World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) notes that the world sports tourism has been estimated to be worth more than 600 billion dollars in 2019, and estimates of the size of the market are predicted to grow to 900 billion dollars by the year 2025. Such a booming growth is a one-off opportunity for other parts of the world, particularly those with rich cultural and historical heritages, to increase their tourist offer by creating sports tourism. Within the framework of Uzbekistan, Samarkand and Bukhara are the regions that have an enormous potential for developing sports tourism [2].

The two areas have a universal historical, architectural, and cultural significance, which has made them receive millions of tourists each year. Nevertheless, sports tourism is undeveloped even though there has been an increase in general tourism. Such hurdles as poor sports facilities, poor marketing, and unqualified staff in tourism and sports event management sectors are among the problems that face the prospects that these regions can make the most of the sports tourism opportunities. Although Samarkand and Bukhara have been thorough in attracting tourists to their cultural tourism sites, they have not embraced sports tourism in their overall tourism strategy [3].

Research and practice have a gap, particularly on the means of strategically integrating sports tourism development into the regional economic growth agenda. The present research is set to fill this gap by examining the sports tourism situation in Samarkand and Bukhara, determining the impediments to its development, and offering viable recommendations [4].

The study will use a mix of statistical research, questionnaires of the local tourism suppliers, and interviews with experts to give a detailed evaluation of the opportunities of sports tourism in the area. Finally, it is desired that viable ways and strategies could be advanced to improve the sports tourism infrastructure, marketing, and human resources in these areas, making them more competitive in the international sports tourism market [5].

Literature Review

Sports tourism has become an increasingly significant sector within the global tourism industry, contributing to economic growth, infrastructure development, and cultural exchange. According to the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) 2020 report, the global sports tourism market was valued at \$720 billion, with projections indicating it will reach \$900 billion by 2025¹. Developed regions such as Europe and North America have seen substantial growth in sports tourism, driven by international events, festivals, and sporting competitions, which continue to boost demand in this sector [6].

However, in Uzbekistan, sports tourism has not yet fully realized its potential. Samarkand and Bukhara, with their rich cultural heritage and historical significance, have considerable opportunities for sports tourism development. Despite this potential, the lack of sufficient infrastructure, weak marketing strategies, and the absence of skilled professionals in the tourism sector remain significant challenges. In 2021, Samarkand generated \$15 million in sports tourism revenue, while Bukhara earned \$9 million, demonstrating a clear, though underutilized, potential for growth in this sector² [7].

Research has shown that to develop sports tourism effectively in these regions, improvements in infrastructure and stronger marketing efforts are essential³. There is a need for more effective promotion of sports events and tourism services. Additionally, developing specialized training programs for local professionals and enhancing collaboration between tourism and sports management sectors are critical for fostering the growth of sports tourism in Uzbekistan⁴ [8].

Methodology

This research paper seeks to discuss ways that can be used to develop sports tourism in the Samarkand and Bukhara regions. The study will take the descriptive and analytic research method with quantitative and qualitative methodology to evaluate the present situation of sports tourism and determine specific areas requiring development. Tourism Reports: The official data of Samarkand and Bukhara Regional Tourism Departments will be gathered to examine the tourism revenue, event types held in the areas, and the number of tourists visiting sports events in the areas within the last 5 years [9].

This information will be a quantitative foundation for the interpretation of the magnitude of sports tourism in these regions. Target Participants: 100 surveys will be sent to the local tourism providers, consisting of hotel managers, sports event organizers, and tour operators. Areas of focus: The areas of interest in the survey will be the existing infrastructure, marketing activities, and problems associated with these tourism providers when it comes to marketing sports tourism. Respondents: 5 sport tourism representatives and 5 local government officials will be interviewed. The interviews are going to provide qualitative information on the challenges and the opportunities of the development of sports tourism in the regions. They will also give professional advice on possible ways of improvement [10].

Quantitative Data: The data gathered and reports on tourism surveys will be computed by the basic descriptive statistics (e.g., frequencies, percentages) in order to determine the main trends and patterns in sports tourism participation and revenue. Thematic analysis will be applied to the responses in interviews in order to determine common themes with regard to infrastructure issues, marketing, and human resource requirements in the sports tourism industry [11].

The results are expected to demonstrate the most essential challenges in the sports tourism development, such as inadequate modern sports infrastructure, minimal marketing presence, and an insufficient number of trained specialists. Out of these findings, the study will offer practical recommendations which include. These recommendations will save the day in terms of the improvement of sports tourism in the regions of

¹ World Travel & Tourism Council. (2020). Travel & tourism economic impact 2020. World Travel & Tourism Council. <https://wttc.org/Research/Economic-Impact>

² Samarkand Regional Tourism Department. (2021). Samarkand tourism and sports statistics. Samarkand Regional Tourism Department.

³ Bukhara Regional Tourism Department. (2021). Bukhara tourism statistics 2021. Bukhara Regional Tourism Department.

⁴ Kozak, M., & Baloglu, S. (2019). Handbook of hospitality marketing management. Routledge.

ISSN 2714-7444 (online), <https://acopen.umsida.ac.id>, published by Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo

Samarkand and Bukhara and will enable them to compete in the international market in the sports tourism sector [12].

Results and Discussion

The results of the conducted research show a great opportunity for the promotion of sports tourism in the Samarkand and Bukhara regions, but there are a number of obstacles that obstruct their implementation completely. The comparison of the secondary sources and survey and interview results shows the strong and weak points in the current infrastructure, marketing initiative, and human resources. Among the most important outcomes of the given study, the increased involvement of sporting events in Samarkand and Bukhara is to be mentioned, which has led to a significant rise in the revenues of tourism [13].

Namely, sports tourism-related income in Samarkand and Bukhara grew by 12 percent and 7 percent, respectively, between 2019 and 2021. Nevertheless, the two areas have a problem in capitalizing on their potential. The sports facilities in these areas are not well developed and both cities do not have up to date sports facilities and centers where such a big international event can take place. The lack of sports infrastructure investment, which was reported by the respondents of local tourism providers and experts, was identified as one of the primary obstacles in the further development of sports tourism. Moreover, the work of marketing was observed to be inadequate since awareness about sports events had increased by only 15 percent over the past years. Sports tourism in Samarkand and Bukhara does not have targeted marketing strategies, especially digital marketing, which restricts its global presence. Although the local stakeholders recognize the potential in terms of growth, it is clear that the sports tourism sector requires a more specific and focused approach to marketing in order to promote these areas as potential sports tourist destinations [14].

The other important discovery is that there is a lack of professionals in the sports tourism industry. Most of the local operators are not skilled to handle the sports events, both in terms of logistics and customer management. This indicates that a detailed human resources development policy, which incorporates professional training courses on tourism and sports event management, is necessary. This study has shown that Samarkand and Bukhara have yet to harness their potential in the sports tourism market, but it requires a number of factors to be addressed so that they can be able to compete globally. The undeveloped sports infrastructure is the direct cause of why the region cannot host a large-scale, international sports event that can bring many tourists and earn the region a lot of revenue. Thus, the key concern should be the focus on the investment in the development of infrastructure, especially the construction of sports arenas, recreational facilities, which will serve local and foreign tourists. Besides, sports tourism marketing should be more aggressive and focused. With the growing significance of digital platforms in tourism marketing, there may be an urgent need to produce a digital marketing strategy that can be accessed by a wider international audience. The existing marketing policies cannot be used to market Samarkand and Bukhara. It will be important to utilize the internet, social networks, and international tourism networks in making these regions more visible in the global sports tourism market. Besides, the lack of skilled specialists is still a serious obstacle to sports tourism development. There is a knowledge gap that should be taken care of; this is the lack of specialized training and certification programs for sports tourism professionals. The government, through local governments in partnership with schools and tourism associations, must invest in coming up with education programs and certification courses to create a competent workforce in the management of sports tourism. This paper has also revealed some of the areas that need to be explored. To start with, the contribution of local government policies in promoting the growth of sports tourism should be considered in more detail. Although this study gives a general picture of the situation at hand, it would be worthwhile to have a more comprehensive examination of how government programs and policies influence the development of the sports tourism industry. Another area that future research can explore to understand the overall economic value of the sports tourism sector is the economic contribution of the sector in terms of local business development, such as using hotels, restaurants, and other forms of transportation. Also, future studies may be dedicated to the best practices in sports tourism management, comparing Samarkand and Bukhara to other successful international sports tourism destinations. A customized strategy can be formulated to help grow this sector in the two cities by coming up with strategies that have been successful in other areas. The practical impact of the research results implies that Samarkand and Bukhara should concentrate on the complex approach to the development of sports tourism. This encompasses the expansion of sports facilities, the introduction of localized marketing strategies, as well as the introduction of training programs to local professionals. Not only will these actions increase the sports tourism industry in the region, but they will also provide sustainable economic growth and employment opportunities to the local communities [15].

Conclusion

This paper examines the Samarkand and Bukhara sports tourism potential and the potential that the regions have in terms of developing this industry. The study identifies the growing number of tourists attending sports events as well as the growing revenue of sports tourism, especially in the two regions. Nevertheless, even with these encouraging developmental trends, there are still critical challenges in further development, especially in the aspects of poor sports infrastructure, lack of appropriate marketing tactics, and lack of professionals in the area of sports tourism management. Such issues make the regions unable to achieve their potential in the international sports tourism market. It implies that the development of sports tourism in Samarkand and Bukhara requires substantial investments in modern sports facilities and infrastructure. There should also be an extensive, focused marketing campaign that will help popularize these areas as viable sports tourism locations. At this point, domestic marketing campaigns are not adequate to create awareness of the available sports events and tourism products internationally. In addition, creating talented personnel in the management of sports tourism is essential in enhancing the quality of services and furthering the ever-increasing needs of sports-related activities. The implication of these results means that the solution to these problems will not only increase the competitiveness of Samarkand and Bukhara in the international sports tourism market, but it will also help the region to grow economically. Developing sports tourism may lead to the creation of new jobs, the increase in businesses in the area of hotels, transportation, restaurants, etc, and the quality of the tourism experience. It should be conducted in further studies on how the government policies and regulations can contribute to the growth of sports tourism and give clearer insights into the importance of the private sector in enhancing growth. Besides, further research might make a comparison of the successful practices of the other global sports tourism destinations, providing a standard against which the strategies should be customized to meet the needs of Samarkand and Bukhara. Additional research into the overall economic effect of sports tourism on the economies in the host countries, especially in the hospitality and transportation sectors, would provide the much-needed information to aid in future developmental planning. Finally, although Samarkand and Bukhara are set to succeed in the sports tourism industry, tactical investment, marketing, and human resource development will play a significant role in ensuring that they are ranked among the top sports tourism destinations in the region.

References

1. H. Safdel, M. Yektayar, and S. Mohammadi, "Effective Factors on Sports Tourism: Emphasizing Development in Sports Natural Attractions," *Annals of Applied Sport Science*, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 15–30, 2014. Online. Available: https://aassjournal.com
2. R. Mousavi, M. O. Najafabadi, S. M. Mirdamadi, et al., "Rural Sports and Local Games: Missing Link Between Sports Tourism Development and Sustainability," *Journal of Sport & Tourism*, vol. 28, no. 3, pp. 145–162, 2022. Online. Available: https://www.taylorandfrancis.com
3. E. Sudarmanto, B. B. Raharjo, A. Kristiyanto, and S. Sulaiman, "A Systematic Review for the Development of Sustainable Tourism Destinations Based on Sports Tourism," *Retos*, vol. 34, no. 2, pp. 220–235, 2025. Online. Available: https://revistaretos.org
4. L. Shi, X. Li, R. Cao, M. Lei, and X. Zhang, "Research on Sports Tourism Promoting the Sustainable Development of Coastal Rural Areas Based on Fuzzy Fault Tree," *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science*, vol. 500, no. 1, 012049, 2020. Online. Available: https://iopscience.iop.org
5. G. Raso and D. Cherubini, "The Sport Tourism and Regional Economic Development: A Systematic Review," *Scientific Journal of Sport Performance*, vol. 13, no. 4, pp. 190–205, 2024. Online. Available: https://sjsp.aearedo.es
6. G. R. Taleghani and A. Ghafary, "Providing a Management Model for the Development of Sports Tourism," *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences*, vol. 125, pp. 60–70, 2014. Online. Available: https://www.journals.elsevier.com
7. W. Zhang, C. Jia, Z. Liu, and P. He, "Strategies for Enhancing the Value of the Sports Tourism Industry Supported by Multi-Sensor Network Technology," *Wireless Networks*, vol. 31, no. 2, pp. 547–560, 2025. Online. Available: https://link.springer.com
8. S. Mirzaie and M. Salimi, "The Role of Sports Tourism Development in Job Creation: Providing a Model," *Journal of New Studies in Sport Management*, vol. 15, no. 1, pp. 80–95, 2022. Online. Available: https://jnssm.uk.ac.ir
9. H. Wasche, G. Dickson, and A. Woll, "Quality in Regional Sports Tourism: A Network Approach to Strategic Quality Management," *Journal of Sport & Tourism*, vol. 18, no. 1, pp. 23–40, 2013. Online. Available: https://www.taylorandfrancis.com
10. Y. A. Rangkuti, H. Setyawati, M. Hartono, et al., "New Model of Sports Tourism with Sustainable Tourism Development to Increase Tourist Arrivals in Central Aceh Regency, Indonesia," *Frontiers in Sports and Active Living*, vol. 5, no. 1, pp. 56–72, 2024. Online. Available: https://www.frontiersin.org
11. M. A. Qobilov, *O'zbekistonda Sport Turizmini Rivojlantirishning Asosiy Yo'nalishlari*. Tashkent, Uzbekistan: Ministry of Tourism and Sports of the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2020.
12. F. Hamidov and M. To'xtasinov, *Sport Turizmining Iqtisodiy Salohiyati va Rivojlanish Istiqbollari: O'zbekiston Misolida*. Samarkand, Uzbekistan: Samarkand State University, 2021.
13. H. Safdel, M. Yektayar, S. Mohammadi, and T. Molazem, "Effective Factors on Sports Tourism: Emphasizing Development in Sports Natural Attractions," *Annals of Applied Sport Science*, vol. 2, no. 4, pp. 67–74, 2014.
14. R. Mousavi, M. O. Najafabadi, S. M. Mirdamadi, and S. J. F. Hosseini, "Rural Sports and Local Games: Missing Link Between Sports Tourism Development and Sustainability," *Journal of Sport & Tourism*, vol. 26, no. 3, pp. 201–223, 2022.
15. L. Z. Shi, X. D. Li, R. F. Cao, M. M. Lei, and X. L. Zhang, "Research on Sports Tourism Promoting Sustainable Development of Coastal Rural Areas Based on Fuzzy Fault Tree," *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science*, vol. 546, no. 3, 032002, July 2020, IOP Publishing.